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LETTER DATED 18 APRIL 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of the official communiqué of the Fourth Arusha Regional Summit on the Burundi conflict, which met in the United Republic of Tanzania on Wednesday, 16 April 1997.

I should appreciate it if the present letter and the attached communiqué could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Daudi N. MWAKAWAGO
Ambassador

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Annex

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE FOURTH ARUSHA REGIONAL SUMMIT ON THE BURUNDI CONFLICT, ISSUED ON 16 APRIL 1997

1. At the invitation of President Benjamin William Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania, Presidents Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, Frederick Chiluba of Zambia and Prime Ministers Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia and Celestin Rwigyema of Rwanda held their fourth Summit on the Great Lakes Region in Arusha on 16 April 1997 to take stock, in particular, of the recent developments in the Burundi conflict. The President of Burundi, Major Pierre Buyoya, was also invited to attend.

2. Also participating in the Regional Summit were the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, and the Facilitator of the Peace Process, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere.

3. The Regional Summit reviewed the situation and developments in Burundi, since its last meeting on 12 October 1996. The Summit also heard the presentation of President Pierre Buyoya of Burundi on the actions he had taken so far in response to the demands of the regional leaders for the restoration of normalcy and negotiated end to the current conflict in Burundi.

4. The Regional Summit underscored the importance of negotiations to bring about a political solution to the problems in Burundi. The Summit welcomed the continuing efforts being made by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere as Facilitator of the Arusha and Mwanza Peace Process. It reiterated its full support for Mwalimu Nyerere and encouraged him to continue with those efforts.

5. The Regional Summit underscored the fact that as far as Burundi was concerned, its objectives and those of the African continent as well as the wider international community converge on the need to end the cycle of violence in Burundi and a negotiated settlement to the conflict in that country. In order to facilitate the early attainment of these common objectives, the Regional Summit appeals to the rest of the continent, and especially to the international community, to exert full political, economic and diplomatic pressures on all the parties in Burundi to pursue a negotiated settlement to the conflict. Such pressures should include an arms embargo, as well as the denial of visas to those who are deemed to be obstructing the peace process. The Summit stressed that no one should arm any of the protagonists and called for the immediate cessation of hostilities.

6. The Regional Summit called on the Government of Burundi and all the parties to the conflict urgently to take steps to create the necessary environment propitious for negotiations and national reconciliation to take place. In particular, the Summit called on the Government to disband the "regroupment" camps and allow the people to resume their normal activities without any hindrance.

7. The Summit considered that for the creation of a conducive spirit for national reconciliation and negotiations to take place, the Government of

Burundi is urged to restore the freedom of the Speaker of the National Assembly and facilitate his work. The Summit considers him an important interlocutor in the process of negotiations.

8. The Regional Summit decided also to expand with immediate effect the easing of sanctions to include all food and food products, all items relating to education and construction materials, as well as all types of medicines, and all agricultural items and inputs in order to alleviate the suffering of the people of Burundi.

9. The Regional Summit decided to designate immediately focal points in every country to facilitate the smooth and efficient implementation of this decision. In the meantime, the Summit called for the speedy and efficient implementation of the exemptions already agreed upon so as to ensure an uninterrupted flow of humanitarian assistance.

10. The Summit declared its readiness to suspend all sanctions, with the exception of the arms embargo, once there is movement in the negotiations.

11. The Regional Summit expressed its gratitude to President Benjamin William Mkapa and to the people and Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for hosting the Summit and for the hospitality accorded to the heads of delegation.